

## British Influence on Modern Sports

著者	Tyler Huw
著者別名	Tyler Huw
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# 現代スポーツにおける英国文化の影響

## British Influence on Modern Sports

How social and industrial changes in 18th. and 19th. Britain had such an impact on the development of modern sports.

ヒュータイラー

Huw Tyler

日本赤十字九州国際看護大学

The Japanese Red Cross Kyushu International College of Nursing

The onset of modern 'sport' as we know it today is surprisingly recent. The majority of popular contemporary sports were not standardized by a set of universally accepted rules until around the second half of the nineteenth century. This was mainly the work of British public school and university students who took it upon themselves to produce a set of written rules. From that time the word 'sport' worked itself into many different languages, albeit sometimes in a slightly different form. <sup>1)</sup> In England itself, prior to the nineteenth century the word, which was derived from the Norman French, referred to hunting or horse racing. <sup>2)</sup>

The word appears in several Shakespearian works.

Gloucester : As flies to wanton boys, are we to the gods;

They kill us for their sport.

(King Lear. Act IV. Scene 1.) <sup>3)</sup>

Prince Hal : If all the world were playing holidays,

To sport would be as tedious as to work;

(Henry IV. Part 1. Act 1. Scene 11.) <sup>4)</sup>

In both these examples, and many others too, sport is used to mean fun or pleasure. It would take another two hundred and fifty years and the industrial revolution with all its profound effects on the structure and lifestyle of British society, to imbibe the word with the meaning of organized games played with regard to a strict set of rules. However, this does not mean to say that there were no organized games before the middle of the nineteenth century or, that they only comprised of horse riding and hunting. Those sports were the preserve of the rich and landed classes. For the simple working man there were a variety of activities and events which I will refer to from now by their name or, collectively, as traditional sports.

The British enjoying themselves before the industrial revolution:

There is a strong parallel between the theatre of Shakespeare's time, his plays and the forms of recreation enjoyed by the different strata of society in England. When you visit the Globe Theatre, reconstructed on the banks of the Thames in London close to the sight of Shakespeare's original theatre, you can choose between purchasing a hard wooden seat in a slightly elevated position protected from the rain by a roof, or, you can buy a place in the yard, by or near the stage, where you stand, sit or walk around during the performance. Of course, the latter option is easier on your pocket but harder on your legs than the first. The theatre itself tries to recreate the atmosphere and style that an Elizabethan playgoer would have encountered. The rich merchants or aristocracy would have peopled the upper deck of seats, whilst the commoners would have opted for the cheap standing area near the stage. You can also see in the construction of his plays that Shakespeare knew exactly the composition of his audience. Apart from his tragedies, his plays are usually a more or less evenly divided mixture of prose and poetry. It is generally accepted that his prose writing was aimed at the common man near the stage, and his poetry was to pander to the desire of the upper echelons of British society to be seen as superior to the men on the ground. The participation in, and popularity of traditional sports in Shakespeare's era, I believe, illustrates a similar pattern.

England, as most European countries at this time, had widely recognized social demarcation lines. The aristocracy, those titled people favoured by the monarchy, saw themselves in a very different society from the peasants who

worked on their land, or even skilled craftsmen who built their castles or shod their horses. These men would be dispensing the queen's law in the shires, gathering men for an army if so called upon to do so by the monarch, or pathfinding new trade routes on land or sea in order to assist the nation's business and trade. They were dynamic and adventurous people who wanted to expand their and their country's wealth. But they were also educated people who were sometimes dealing with complicated political issues and foreign rivals who were similarly dynamic and intelligent.

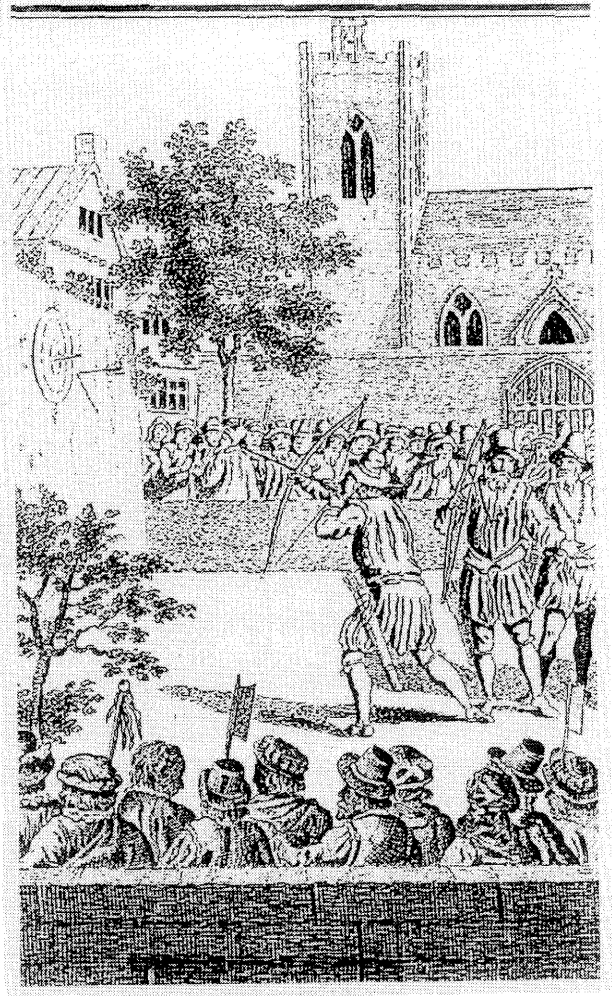
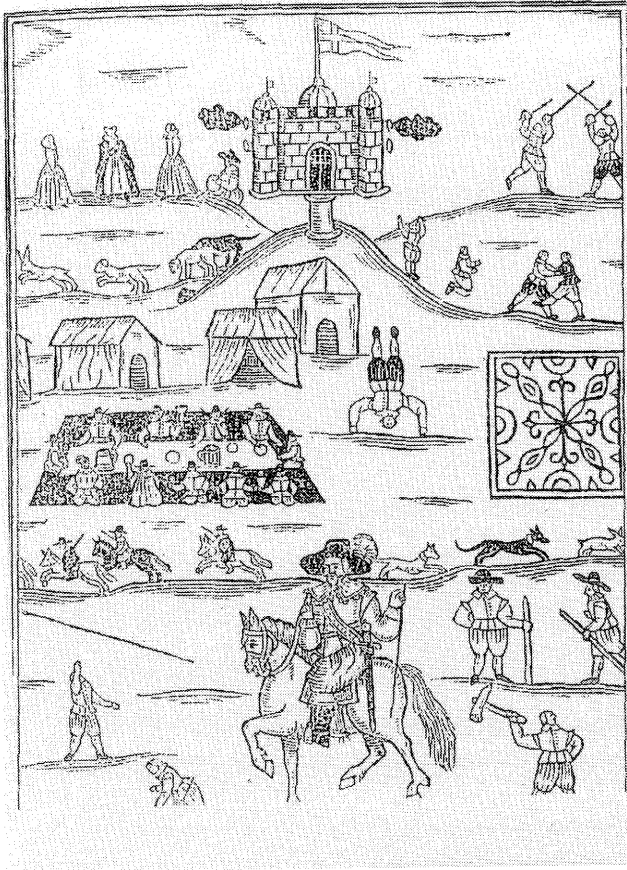
So, for their fun they would attend the theatre where they demanded to be stimulated not only by the cleverness of Shakespeare's stories but also by the power and beauty of his language. Apart from artistic pursuits, the aristocracy would have followed the traditional pastimes for people of their standing such as hunting, horse riding and practising weaponry.

They believed they were of high blood and so it was only fitting that their daily lives should contain a proper balance between work, rest and play.

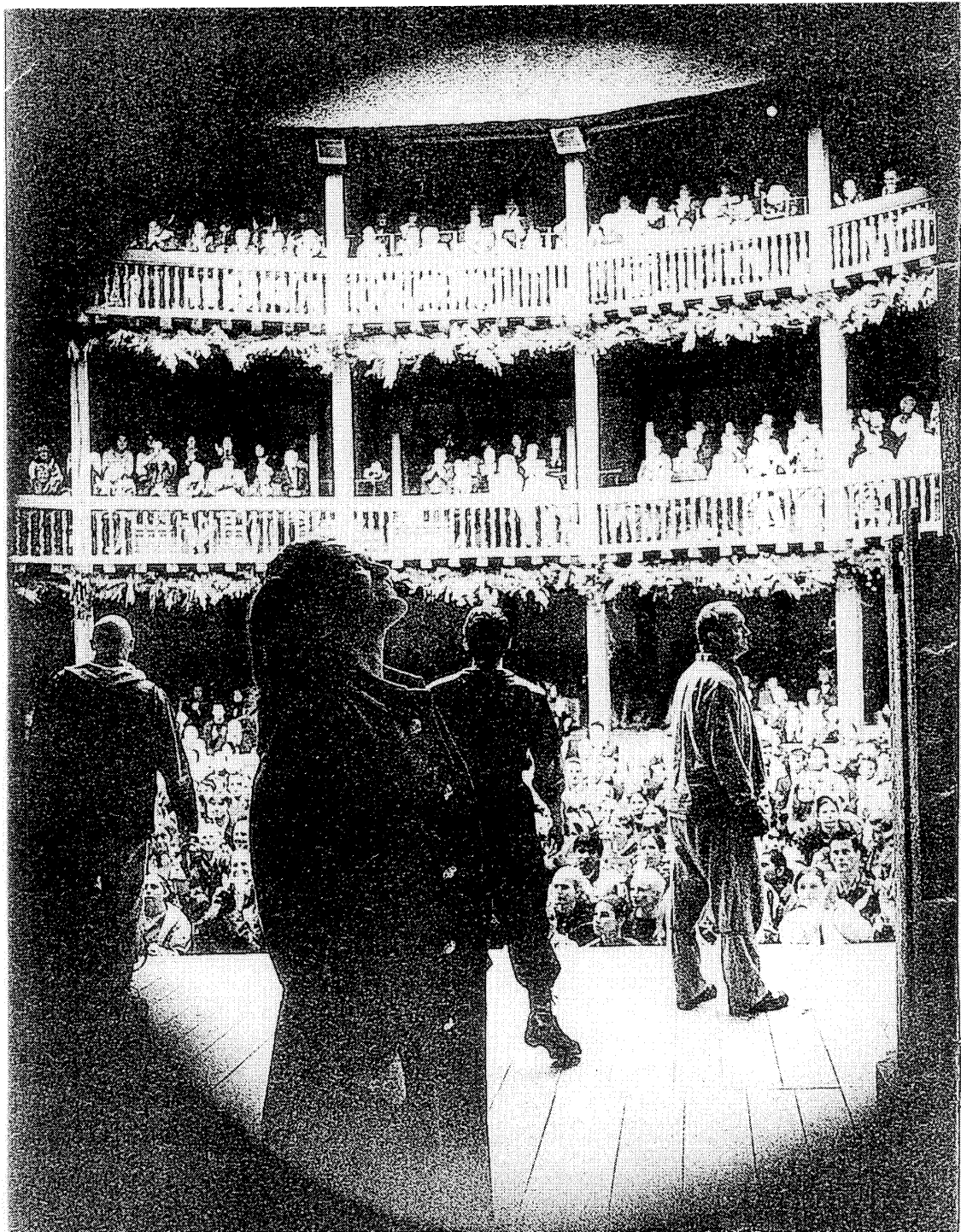
This would not have been the case with working class labourers in the city or the country peasants. They would not have enjoyed sufficient free time to indulge their fancies so easily. They also knew their place on the social ladder and would not have expected to follow the same kind of activities as their superiors. God was in his heaven, the King ruled on earth by divine right, and all was well. The ordinary man would have been permitted to wrestle, run, dance, juggle, play throwing games as well as various forms of football. Blood sports using animals were widespread and popular, especially in the countryside. However, it is interesting to note that from time to time the higher authorities occasionally clamped down on the pursuits of the working man. As early as the 14th. century, football was banned because of its excessive violence. In actual fact the King was more worried that the popularity of the sport was distracting the male population from their military training.

So, the sporting map in Shakespeare's England displayed a contrast in the sports enjoyed by citizens coming from different social and economic backgrounds. There is also a suggestion that the countryside appeared to be the focus for most sporting events although many of the cruder blood sports were enjoyed in the cities too. This is not too surprising as at that time the majority of the population would have been living outside the cities. However, from the end of the 17th. century a number of events occurred which were to change

the whole face of the nation and the manner in which sport was played.



1. A drawing of Captain Robert Dover's Cotswold Games.
2. A drawing of an archery contest in London during the reign of Elizabeth 1st.



3. A picture of the reconstructed Globe Theatre by the Thames river in London. Note the people standing near the stage and the galleries behind where some of the audience is seated.

## The Industrial Revolution

The second half of the 18th. century in Britain witnessed a tremendous surge forward in the nation's economic development as inventions and technological innovations completely changed the way people worked and lived. It also brought great riches to the entrepreneurs who realised the value of harnessing the power of steam, water and fire allowing man to create machines to do much of his arduous work for him. The process began in the cotton spinning towns of Lancashire, West Yorkshire and central Scotland. But as the need for raw materials and the means to transport them grew, so too did the construction of factories and docks until much of northern England, the Midlands and, to a lesser extent, parts of the south of England were affected.

Sir Richard Arkwright, originally a barber from Preston, spent much of his time developing innovations to the process of cotton spinning. In 1768 in Bolton he succeeded in creating a machine which could do this and, at the same time, make a much stronger yarn. There was opposition to his invention by people who believed his mechanical loom would consign cotton workers to unemployment. In fact, it started a boom in the area. The hills and valleys around places such as Manchester and Leeds which were already blessed with a climate ideal for cotton production became the homes of numerous cotton mill towns like Oldham, Rochdale and Wigan. These mills needed people to work them so the region became a magnet for those in rural areas who wanted to improve their economic standing. The overall business activity in this region was expanding too, so the cumulative effect was the formation of the first industrial conurbation in the modern world. It also had the effect of changing the way the people employed in these industries worked and played.

Alongside the economic effects of the industrial revolution ran the sociological ones. The concentration of so many people into one area was the start of the urbanisation of Great Britain. From the latter half of the 18th. century the movement of labour from the villages to the towns and cities of Britain continued at a rapid pace until the First World War. The trend has continued up to the present if we substitute suburbs for city and towns. What was so significant about the 18th. and 19th. century demographic change was its scale, nature and time frame. In 1731 the population of Britain was about 5,200,000. Most of that figure would have been living in the countryside. In 1801 the

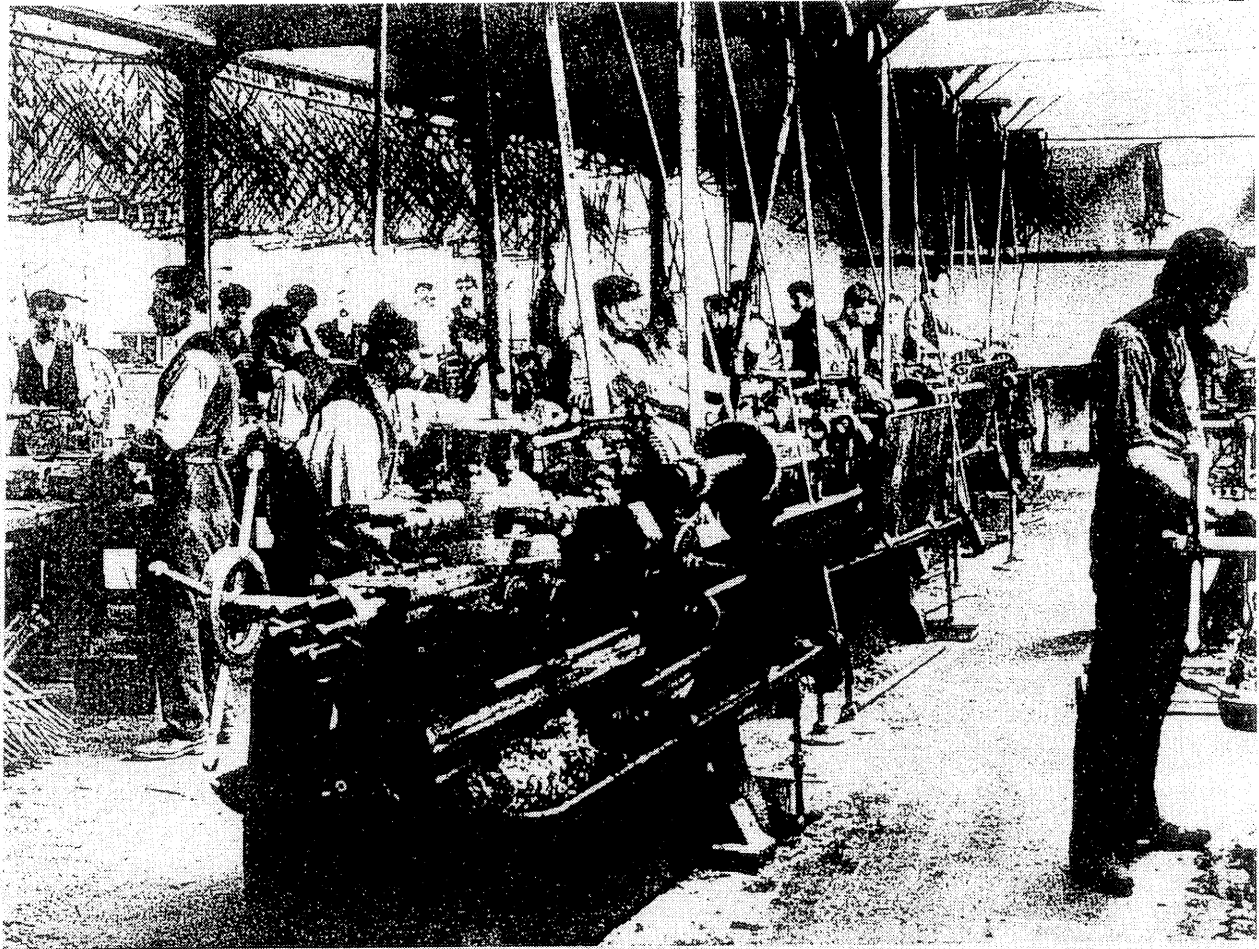
population had risen to 15,740,000, of which 30% lived in towns and 21% of the towns had populations of more than 10,000.

By 1901 over 80% of the British population were urbanized with 74 towns boasting a population of 50,000 or more. Furthermore, Britain had seven industrial conurbations. London was the largest with 7,100,000 people and Tyneside the smallest with 800,000 people.<sup>6)</sup>

The vast majority of these economic refugees came from farming communities where the rhythms of work were determined by nature. So due to the vagaries of their master the farm labourers would have followed a more loosely controlled daily schedule. There would no doubt have been more variety in this environment as they were working together with living things for most of their day. Some activities would have replicated so called traditional sports. For example; hunting predators, using dogs to hunt down predators, riding, herding up animals, and perhaps some of the other physical elements of the work such as throwing and lifting. Local festivals would also have provided an excuse for competitions and dancing. However, in their new working environment there was little place for nature. The working day was strictly controlled by superiors who were only interested in the productivity of their labour force. The work itself was broken down into each component process so that the factory worker was never involved in the totality of the production. This in itself must have been frustrating, but on top of that was the tight control on a labourer's work time, and the restricted work space inside a factory.

Their living conditions too would have been cramped, especially if a worker took his whole family with him. The early housing, typically a two bedroomed terraced dwelling, were often damp and insanitary. Tuberculosis was common in these communities. The 'tommy shop' was often a feature of a town developed around one big employer. This was a company shop where workers had very little option but to spend their money for food and other essentials. What a difference this would have been from their rural roots where they would have grown much of their food themselves.





BRITISH WORKSHOP, small in comparison with its Continental equivalent: the factory, c.1890.

At first, the financial attractions of the new mechanised economy must have been sufficient for these emigrants to the new urban conurbations. But after some time industrialised man must have started to think more deeply about the quality of his life and started to realize that there was indeed a vacuum that needed filling. Unfortunately it was not within the power of these simple working men to take the action necessary to facilitate the changes necessary to upgrade their lifestyle. Those decisions would be made by people who would not normally have mingled in the same society as their labour force.

#### Power, Education & People

"English sport then, supported, reinforced, and reflected fundamental assumptions that were necessary to maintain a public consensus when the folk

and local culture were uprooted. They underlay the social discipline needed for subjection to industrial work.”<sup>5)</sup>

England had been slowly democratizing since the signing of the Magna Carta by King John in 1215. The most important of its 63 clauses established a free man's right to justice and protection from the tyranny of the King by the word of law and judged by fellow free men.

Civil war between 1640 and 1648 had led to a short lived republic being established. The pedantic severity of that regime persuaded the people's representatives in parliament to revert to a monarchy once more. That was the closest the nation came to a full-blooded revolution. Even when parliament once more became disenchanted with the King, no blood was spilt. With typical low key English diplomacy, William, Prince of Orange was invited to invade England with a combined English and Dutch army, and, having successfully forced King James II to flee, was offered the job of King of England.

Power:

So, one hundred years later when many British working men, with no stake in the country as far as property and voting rights went, came through a major upheaval in their social and working lives but there was no major or immediate backlash. This is not too surprising as most revolutions are prompted by the middle classes. However, 1793 saw the French Revolution and many of Europe's aristocracy feared that there might be a knock on effect throughout the continent. But Britain was enjoying peace and prosperity. The aristocracy was smaller than Europe's nobility and they laid emphasis on gentlemanly behaviour as a criterion for distinguishing themselves apart from commoners. There was a mildness in their demeanour which commanded rather than demanded respect. Perhaps their greatest political attribute was in being able to accommodate potential rivals. This was certainly the case with the emerging merchant classes who were keen to expand their wealth by finding new goods overseas which they could trade back in Europe. The power brokers in the nation were reasonable men who knew there was no advantage in resorting to violence to try and solve disagreements. Change and new freedoms did emerge in 19th. century Britain but the battleground was parliament and the weapons were words. However, that is not to say that the leaders of the nation were weak, supine figures. Instead of directing their aggression at

dissenting voices in the society, they found a much more positive and enjoyable way to channel their need for excitement; sport.

Towards the end of the 18th. century we begin to hear of the gentlemen runners and boxers. The popularity of the former is attested by the construction of custom built running tracks in Glasgow and Edinburgh between the 1750s and 1860s. Promoters felt confident that with runners as popular as Captain Barclay they could attract a large crowds.<sup>7)</sup> Boxing was patronized by the wealthiest and most influential people in the land. Fighters were sponsored, arenas were built and even schools were opened to teach the "noble art of self defense". The first recognized boxing champion, James Figg, appeared as early as 1719.<sup>8)</sup> The aristocracy were deeply involved in the development of sports at this time. In 1727 the Duke of Richmond wrote a set of rules for cricket. These were probably the first rules to be written for any sport. The fascination of sport for the British aristocracy, and the entrepreneurial classes as well, seems to have been "the wager". The contest was not determined by God, the correctness of form, but by a man's knowledge of the event. Wasn't this the speculative venture of an entrepreneur? And this was the era when British entrepreneurs were the most successful in the world and eager to prove that their abilities in the business world could be successfully transferred to the world of sport. And so it is not surprising to see the aristocracy and business classes taking an active financial interest in promoting horse racing. Following the establishment of the Jockey Club in 1752 three classic races were inaugurated in the latter half of the 18th. century; The St. Leger (1776), The Oaks (1779) and The Derby (1780). It is estimated that nearly 100,000 people went to Epsom Downs to see the event. Among them were stall keepers and prostitutes who found they could do very good business amongst the upper echelons of British society.<sup>9)</sup>

The power of the aristocracy and their desire to distinguish themselves from the common man was a catalyst not only to the development of new sports, but also to the prohibition of many of the traditional sports which had been enjoyed by the common man. As social norms changed and manners became increasingly important, there was a leaning towards a more genteel, refined society. This reflected itself in a growing sensitivity to, or even abhorrence of, blood sports. "Growing concern about the treatment of animals," Keith Thomas concludes, 'was one of the most distinctive features of late eighteenth

h century English middle-class culture.<sup>10)</sup> Between 1800 and 1835, 11 bills to bar bear baiting and bear running failed to be adopted by parliament.<sup>11)</sup> However, in the early 1840s bull running was successfully stopped in the town of Stamford but not by parliamentary edict. The local council slapped a tax on the shopkeepers and home owners in the town for the costs incurred in cleaning up the town after the event. After that bull running disappeared very quickly. In fact by the late 1860s most spectator blood sports had been declared illegal. It is true to say that the law and what actually happens do not always converge. Blood sports is such a case as people tend to hold on to their cherished traditions. As late as 1985 many British people were surprised to read in their newspapers of dog fights which had been secretly filmed thus leading to a prosecution. And there were reports of cock fighting in Cumbria in the 1970s.

#### Education:

The British aristocracy's pragmatism in its dealings with different social classes was evident in its attitude to public school education. Unlike the European aristocracies who only permitted their children to associate with children from their own class, their British counterparts were happy to have the children of the country's merchant and entrepreneurial classes sit together in the same classrooms. After all, it was those classes who were responsible for much of the nation's wealth and influence.

Perhaps it was the mixing of classes in the upper echelons of British society which had such startling reverberations through the whole of the British social class system. Both groups had their own vested interests in drawing up a set of universal rules for the various 'new' sports which would supercede the class ridden traditional sports of old. For the aristocracy it was a chance to distinguish themselves by displaying a superior manner and attitude to the challenges inherent in sporting competition. They may also have felt that that could be a key to success in such events. If this was indeed so, then the 19th. century British aristocracy were probably the unwitting forerunners of the sports psychologists. As for the merchant and entrepreneurial classes, it gave them an opportunity to establish themselves as worthy partners of the ruling classes. If, on a level playing field with all things being fair to all parties, they could match or surpass the achievements of their aristocratic colleagues, then why should they not be trusted with an equal share

of authority in drawing up the rules by which the nation and growing empire were governed? So when the sons from these two different social classes made the rules of Britain's best loved sports their actions would have an influence on matters far outside the sporting arena.

One of the most striking influences was within the educational system itself. As sport became an ever more important part of the school curriculum it began winning over many converts to its value in the overall development of pupils' characters as well as intellect. Under the public school house system sport was woven into the schools' organization as inter-house competitions became a regular feature of games day and physical education classes. The aristocrats' concern with their own public persona led to the cult of athleticism in public schools and the striving for 'Gentleman - Amateur' status. It was also seen as a means of instilling a sense of discipline and morality to a school system which at times fostered violence and even anarchy. The former was exemplified in the gratuitous violence handed out to new students, or 'fags', by the older boys. And a practise called 'barring out' saw students barricading themselves in the school and throwing out the teachers. When this happened in Marlborough School the headmaster was obliged to resign and in 1853 G.E.L. Cotton became the new head. The appointment was significant as he came from Rugby School which stressed the character building attributes of sport within the school curriculum. The following examples are hint as to the increasing prominence of sport in the British education system during the latter half of the 19th. century.

Jesus College Cambridge won consecutive Head of the River victories from 1875 - 1886 and excelled in other sports too. However, it claimed no academic distinction at all.

A notice at Eton School read;

"Any lower boy in this house who does not play football once a day and twice on half holiday will be fined half a crown and kicked."

Edward Thring, the headmaster at Uppingham School, wrote 10 basic rules for football in 1862 and it was these rules which were the basis for the rule book when the football Football Association was first established in 1863. However, not every headmaster was convinced of the value of football as the

following comment by Samuel Butler, head of Shrewsbury School, testifies.

"more fit for farm boys and labourers than for young gentlemen." <sup>12)</sup>

People:

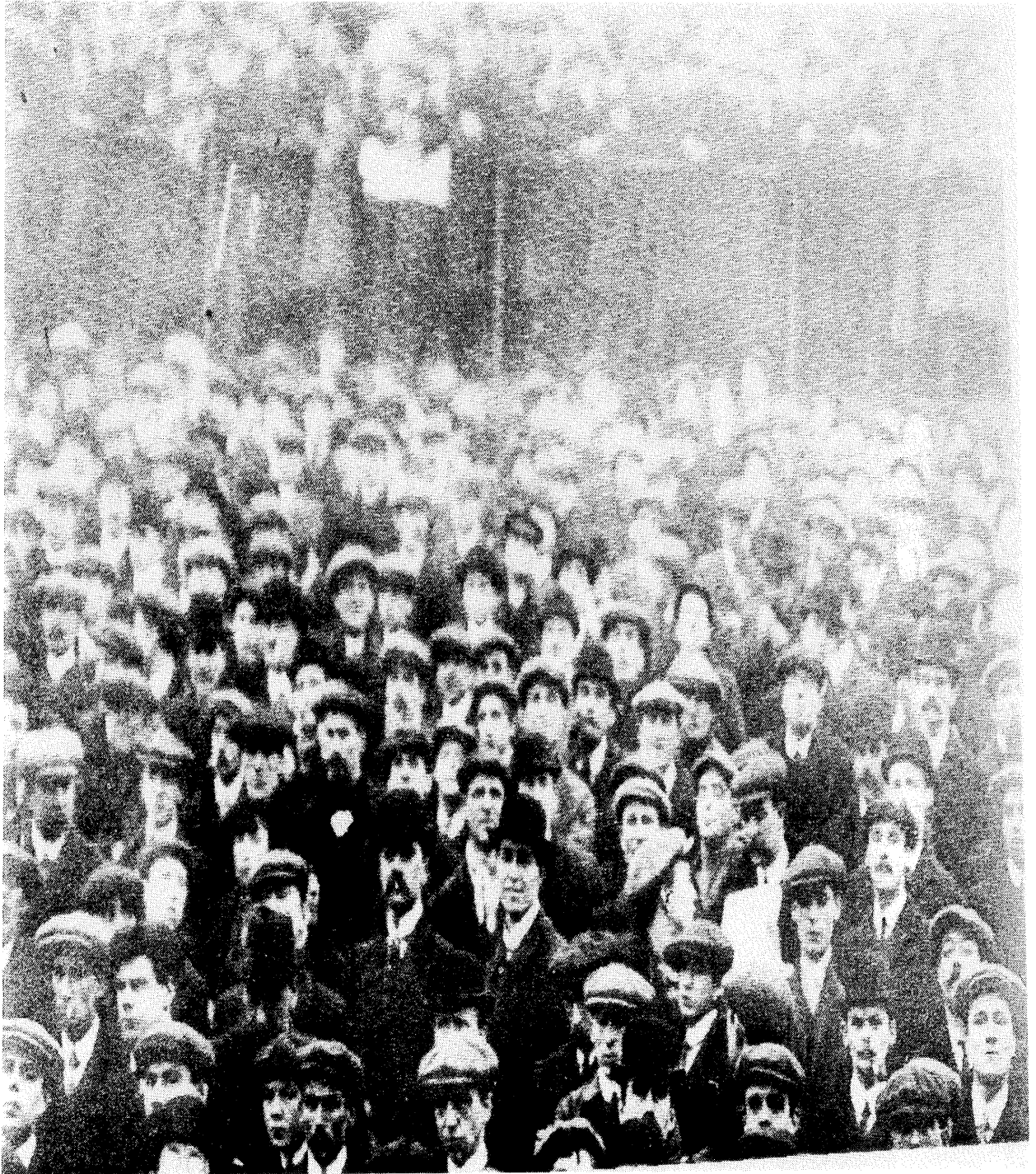
"the emancipation of their class appears to them as a foolish dream ...it is football, boxing, horse racing which move them the deepest and to which their entire leisure time, their individual powers and their material means are devoted."

These were the despairing words of the pre-eminent German Marxist, Karl Kautsky, about the British working classes. It is certainly true that the working classes embraced these new sports. There is no doubt that as the industrial revolution took hold of Britain endowing people with more money and only a strictly regulated time to enjoy it, so participation and attendance at sporting events rapidly increased during the nineteenth century. For example, the number of clubs affiliated to the Caledonian Curling Club between 1838 and 1900 increased from 36 to 655 with 20,000 members. In 1879 there were only seventy two golf clubs in Britain. That number had risen to 1,200 by 1912. The number of anglers in the Sheffield Anglers Association in 1869 had reached 8,000. By the start of World War 1 this number had risen to 21,291 with the number of clubs almost tripling. It is estimated that in 1910 between 450,000 and 650,000 people in England and Scotland played football and more than 600,000 people in the north of England played crown green bowls.

By the 1890s even minor horse race meetings attracted crowds of 10,000 or more and the major Bank Holiday meetings upto 80,000 (Huggins, 1987:109; Vamplew, 1988a:1). Attendances for county cricket matches increased from 2,00-3,000 in the 1840s to between 8,000 and 24,000, depending on the importance of the match, by 1900. And in football First Division attendances rose from an average of 4,600 in 1889-90 to 23,100 in 1909. This surge in popularity also had the affect of encouraging greater professionalism. Horse race meetings which used to be free began charging gate money. Several hundred people were employed as ground staff at cricket grounds. The number of English professional foot ballers in 1889 was 1,092. By 1914 this had increased to 7,000 of whom 2,500 were professional. Clubs were spending money on their grounds as were rugby league and golf clubs. Sport was providing work for 10,000 people in horses racing in the 1890s, 23,000 people in England and Wales were employed as gamekeepers, and by 1912 there were at least 10,000 golf caddies. <sup>13)</sup>

The democratising of sport and thus, theoretically, placing it outside the realm of the class ridden society, gave it the potential for the creation of sport's heroes' who could reach an elevated status in society with the blessings of all classes. It therefore not only gave hope to the people who had been sucked into the anonymity of the 'work force' but it also provided a social focus for those same people who had had to abandon their traditional culture.<sup>14)</sup> I think it is this democratising process which has changed the face of sport throughout the world. It mirrored the wider movement in British society to greater democratisation as Reform Acts in 1832, 1867 and 1884 expanded suffrage to almost the entire male population over the age of 21. The rights of the common man were further cemented by Balfour's Education Act of 1902. Prior to this slavery had been abolished in the British Empire in 1834. These achievements have to be contrasted with developments in continental Europe where the old monarchies and aristocracies were trying to hold on to power in the face of determined opposition. The period from 1848 - 1870 is often referred to in European history as the age of revolution.

And so the emerging new sports in the nineteenth century Britain with their rules which fastidiously emphasized the importance of fairness and the rights of any individual, so long as they adhered to those rules, to participate, echoed the hope and progressiveness of the laws that were passed in the British parliament. Freedom and inclusiveness are an intoxicating mixture which through British trading and military prowess were about to make the whole world tipsy on a cocktail of fun and games, or perhaps more correctly, rules and sport.



- 4 . These are spectators at the Tottenham Hotspurs vs. Sunderland football match in 1912. Notice that there are no women in the crowd. It is also almost impossible to judge which social groups these men came from. In those days people dressed formally even just to watch a football match



## The British Empire:

The Battle of Trafalgar in 1805 confirmed the British navy as the unrivalled master of the seas. This in turn allowed British trading interests to develop with impunity all over the world. And indeed this is what happened. British trade, and therefore, political interests abounded throughout the world. By the middle of the Victorian era Britain was the most powerful nation in the world. Its challenge was to manage its diverse interests which were scattered across the globe. This challenge was to a large degree met by the concept of muscular Christianity, or, the muscular elite. And it found a willing ally in the form of the British public school with its policy of developing a pupil's physical development as well as their intellectual one. If we remember that the merchant and entrepreneurial classes had been accepted into public schools with welcoming arms, it is easy to see how that institution could lend itself to becoming an integral part of the management of British interests in its colonies. Even Britain's colonial rivals such as Germany and France felt somewhat envious of the practical advantages that the British public school system had over their more elitist and intellectually challenging system. For most teachers in the public school system, sport in school and the running of an empire came to be seen as part of the same process.

"It is written that England has owed her sovereignty to her sports."

(J.E.C. Weldon, headmaster Harrow 1881 - 1895)

The Sudan Political Service established in 1899 recruited by recommendation from trusted Oxbridge professors with particular emphasis put on the candidate's ability on the sports field. The overriding ethic was, 'better a poor scholar than a poor sportsman.'

Cricket has, perhaps, the earliest written rules of any British sport and so it seems to have had a particular poignancy in consideration to the British and their relationship with the local peoples .

'Cricket reflected the colonial racial hierarchy . . .

'Cricket has helped both to sharpen a sense of nationalism and to soften its impact on Britain through the maintenance of close sporting contacts between former colonies and the mother country.'<sup>15)</sup>

The link between the British public school and sport is always brought to the fore in any discussion of British, especially nineteenth century Britain, influence on the development of modern day sports. However, when we look at the establishment of many present day sports, it appears to me that the British Empire, its army and the colonists who went out to manage British interests, had just as much, if not more, impact on the variety of different sports which were given a firm set of rules and organization during that century of British imperial might. This should not be surprising as the army and the colonists were quite well off and they had time on their hands. Given these circumstances some set their sights on concocting great cocktails like gin with indian tonic water, while others would have put their minds to creating new forms of exercise, competition and challenge. The sportsmen amongst the colonists having once devised new ways of hard, physical labour would no doubt have appreciated the efforts of the cocktail makers as they relaxed after their strenuous efforts. So let's look at some of the sports which we now enjoy and see how they were given form by a nation which was bustling with energy, but also appreciated the constraints and parameters within which man must operate to become part of an efficient industrious unit. Surely the very aim which an ambitious coach has for their team.

#### The Game; The Rules:

The national sports of England, although not necessarily the other countries of the U.K., are cricket and football. The reason for there being two national sports is that the British still tend to regard sports as seasonal activities.

#### Cricket:

This quintessential English game has probably the oldest set of rules of any contemporary sport. Like a number of modern games it was given a definite form and order after gaining popularity on the lawns of the nation's aristocrats when they threw lavish parties. The first set of rules are attributed to the Duke of Richmond in 1727. The game being born before the industrial revolution still has an aura stemming from an era when the upper echelons of society, and the lower, acknowledged that they took up different and separate roles in this world. Even as late as the 1960s an annual match at Lords featured 2 top class teams named Players and Gentlemen. This is a throw back to the

Gentleman - Amateur and the desire of the 17th. & 18th. century aristocrats to distinguish themselves by the manner of their play. The Players team was made up from paid professional cricketers who played for one of the seventeen county cricket sides. The Gentlemen's team would have a proper job apart from cricket and so they would not get paid for their cricket efforts. The rules of cricket have changed quite a lot from those drawn up nearly three hundred years ago. Notably, overarm bowling, limited over games and coloured clothing with the names of sponsors displayed. Yet despite the longevity of the game and the undoubted passion that it evokes in the countries where it is played, primarily previously British colonies, it has not gained the universal popularity of many of the sports which appeared later.

#### Football:

The sport generally regarded as the most popular in the world has origins in mass participation sports dating back many hundreds or even thousands of years. Even within Britain there were many related games which were enjoyed by the population of a whole town or village, or by the fraternity of public schools. It was this latter group which, for their own mutual benefit, decided to write out a set of common rules by which to play the game. The first attempt to write a set of rules was by Messrs. de Winton and Thring at Cambridge University in 1846. Two years later a group of 14 students from public schools including Eton, Winchester, Harrow, Rugby and Shrewsbury and studying at Cambridge University, were more successful. By the 1860s it was decided that there should be a football association set up to govern the game under a clearly defined and accepted set of rules. On October 26th. 1863, in the Freemasons Tavern, London, 11 representatives from various schools and clubs met to agree on a set of universal rules. All but one member, the Blackheath Club, agreed to a set of 14 rules including two which banned running with the ball and another which banned kicking an opposing player. The ten remaining members formed the Football Association and published the rules in December of the same year.<sup>16)</sup>

#### Rugby:

The game was usually referred to as rugby football. This clearly relates to its origins as one of a number of varieties of the game which most civilized

people refer to as football. Another conspicuous variety is Australian rules football. William Ellis is credited with picking up the ball in a game of football played at his public school in Rugby in 1823. This may or may not have been the case but what is true is that running with the ball, rucking and kicking the other players became a popular form of football. However, when it was not adopted as the form which the Football Association was going to endorse, its supporters regrouped and formed their own Rugby Union in 1869.

#### Badminton:

This was a game whose origins date back to fifth century China. It was later discovered in a much changed form by British officers serving out in India. They brought the necessary equipment back from India and the game won popularity at the Duke of Beaufort's garden parties held at his home in; Badminton. The game was officially recognized as 'Badminton' in 1873.<sup>17)</sup>

#### Bowls:

This game probably has its origins in the sport known as bocce. Bocce dates back a long way and was reportedly banned in 1319 by the Holy Roman Emperor. It is famous in British folklore as the game Francis Drake was playing as the Spanish Armada was approaching the British coast with the intention of invasion. The English adventurer is quoted as saying, "First, we finish the game, then we have time for the invincible armada." Of course, if Sir Francis, as he became later, had lost the battle, this quote, and bowls too, may have been lost to posterity. The game became immensely popular with working class people during the industrial revolution. The first rules were drawn up by a Glaswegian solicitor in 1849. But this was for a form known as flat green bowling. Another form of the sport known as crown green bowling is very popular in the old northern industrial areas. It featured in a book by Brian Jackson titled 'Working Class Community'. This made particular reference to the importance of the game to the local communities in the Huddersfield area of Yorkshire. Most of these sports were fostered by pubs or working men's clubs and were, and are, a very important focal point in the life of the local communities

## Boxing:

This is a 'sport' which can be traced back as hand to hand combat to the earliest civilizations. It first appeared in Britain as a spectator event during the 18th. century. At that time bareknuckles were used and the fights normally continued until one of the contestants could no longer continue. In 1734, Broughton's Rules were introduced to at least try and prevent some of the worst elements of such combat. These were reformed around 1743 under the name of, 'London Prize Ring Rules'. However, it is the Marquess of Queensbury rules, written in 1867 by Arthur Graham Chambers, which were to be the model on which the modern day sport is based. It was these rules which introduced the wearing of gloves and a limit on the time a contest or round could continue. It was opposition to the gambling and violence associated with the sport which basically necessitated these changes.<sup>18)</sup>

## Golf:

It was probably the Romans who first brought some kind of activity similar to golf to the British Isles. The game seems to have been most popular in Scotland first of all. As so many other sports it was banned in Scotland at one time for interfering with the war effort. James VI of Scotland, otherwise known as James 1st. of England, apparently confessed a great affection for the game. The world's first golf club was the Gentleman Golfers of Edinburgh in 1744. Ten years later the Royal and Ancient in St. Andrews was established and is now the ruling body for the game in Britain and most other countries with the notable exception of the USA.

## Polo:

This is yet another sport which came to us via the army and with a strong Indian connection. It is thought to have developed out of pig sticking. The Indian natives no doubt did this on foot but the British military would have been on horseback using lances. Therefore, in the Indian colonial context the sport evolved out of a demonstration of military strength which could be viewed as means of deterrent to potential agitators. A Captain Sherer found the native sport in Assam during the 1850s. The first club was formed in 1862 and the game was first played in Britain in 1870.<sup>19)</sup>

Tennis:

Although this game owes a lot to the French sport jeu de paume and subsequently royal tennis, it was yet another soldier, Major Wingfield, who actually patented the game under his rules in 1874. After that the game flourished in a very short space of time. The first All England Championships were held at Wimbledon 1876 and these were soon followed by the French and then the USA championships. It is interesting to note that originally the major wanted to call it sphairistike, a Greek word meaning ball game.

There are other games and sports like quoits, squash, shovehapenny and more which have at least some of their roots in British soil. They have all to a greater or lesser degree entertained people, many of whom may have sought a release from a daily routine which is rigid, enforced and allowing for very little creativity. It was in just such a society where these games were invented, or at least developed. The structured work practises of industrialized Britain lent themselves to a more structured form of play. But it is interesting to note that the inventors or adaptors of these sports were by and large intelligent men with many and varied opportunities for self expression. I do not believe it was their intention but through their love of adventure and fun, and their own ingenuity, the British men who gave form to these 'idle pleasures' also gave people with far less opportunities and experience the chance to express themselves in a far more dynamic way than they would ever be able to do in their work, and in a few rare cases, to escape from a world of suffocating predictability into a world of possibilities by the medium of sport.

The time when these activities happened coincided with a time in history when Britain was best placed to affect the leisure time patterns of man. The fact that a number of men from that island had the drive, interest, curiosity and benign intent to do that has largely been a matter of joy and excitement for the world. However, more recent developments in the world of sport indicate that some of the founding principles in the establishment of organized sport such as fairness, respect for the rules and an elevation of the human spirit through an adherence to these principles even when in a state of competition, maybe under threat from the overbearing shadow of capitalism, consumerism and commercialism. Let us hope that the original idea for creating a universal set of rules for sport so that all people from whatever background and nation

can become part of an inclusive global club created through sporting endeavour, will not be forsaken.

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